

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Don Wright Faculty of Music

MUSIC 1953Y

Introduction to Historical Keyboard: Repertoire, Technique and Performance Practice

Mondays 1:30-3:00 pm, MB 210

Instructor: Dr. Borys Medicky

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Course Description

This course gives students a hands-on introduction to early keyboard instruments—specifically the harpsichord and fortepiano—and to Baroque performance practice. We will explore keyboard music composed between approximately 1600 and 1800, focusing on solo technique and repertoire and on basso continuo accompaniment. We will also discuss performance practice: what it means, what kind of knowledge it consists of, the limits of what we know today regarding how music was performed in the past, and why all this matters when learning to understand and interpret Baroque music.

In class, there will be some academic instruction as necessary, but much of the time we will listen to musical examples, study scores, play the harpsichord and discuss student performances as a group. Homework assignments will feature some reading, some listening or viewing of audio/video examples, and exercises to make students confront performance practice challenges. Proficiency in a keyboard instrument such as piano or organ is helpful, but non-keyboard students are also welcome: the practical part of their classroom experience will be oriented towards repertoire suitable for their instrument/voice which features basso continuo accompaniment. Keyboard instruments are available for individual practice throughout the year.

Students completing this course will appreciate what makes early keyboards distinct from their modern counterparts and how these instruments are uniquely suited to Baroque music. They will gain an understanding of the limits of musical notation and how performance practice bridges the gap between the printed page and a compelling musical performance.

Evaluation

Attendance and participation	50%
Short essay	10% (maximum 1000 words, due by year's end)
Midterm	10% (December exam period)
Performance	15% (final classes of the spring semester)
Final exam	15% (April exam period)

There is no textbook for this course and the work is largely practical. There will be some assigned reading and listening, for which the materials will be available either online or on reserve in the library.

Attendance and participation are crucial in this course. You will not be able to learn the required material if you are not present or do not participate in the practical aspects of the course. Some classes will be much like studio classes for instrumentalists, where everyone as a group listens to and comments on individual performances. You will learn as much listening as you will playing.

The **short essay** is the result of your own further investigation of an in-class topic you have found particularly interesting and wish to know more about (examples: ornamentation, rhythmic treatment, issues of notation, etc.) It should be no more than 1000 words (about 4-5 pages) in length and is due anytime before the end of the academic year. We will discuss this assignment in the first few weeks of the class.

The **midterm** will take place in December. It is a written exam covering questions of solo repertoire interpretation and performance practice issues. There will be a very short listening component as well.

Performances will take place during the final classes of the academic year. You will perform either a short keyboard solo or a continuo accompaniment with a singer or instrumentalist (one song or aria, or one movement from an instrumental sonata). You will be graded on your harpsichord or fortepiano technique and the effectiveness of your performance practice decisions.

The **final exam** will take place in April. There will be a short practical portion at the keyboard, during which students will study a short figured bass passage and play their realization. The remaining part of the exam will cover performance practice topics introduced during the spring semester. Students will sign up beforehand for individual slots to take the practical part of the exam and will take the remaining portion as a group.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office. For the Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Special Note for COVID-19-related Situations

As a guideline, if a student has been contacted by the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) to self-quarantine due to a COVID-19-related situation, then the Self-Reported Absence system is not to be used to report this absence or to request an academic accommodation. The student should contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as they are notified.

In general, students are advised to not self-determine when to self-isolate. Unless directed by the MLHU students should go about their business as usual. But if a student chooses to self-isolate due to a suspected Covid-19-related situation while waiting to receive direction from the MLHU then the student is directed to contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as possible for further direction on receiving accommodation consideration.

Academic Consideration for Missing Work

In cases where students are unable to submit work due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online self-reported absence is submitted, or if appropriate supporting documentation is submitted to the Associate Dean's office, and the accommodation is granted, then the missed assessments may be rescheduled or discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. If neither a self-reported absence nor an appropriate supporting document is submitted to the appropriate office, then the missed assignments will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Offences

Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health & Wellness

Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar:

<http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

COVID-19 INFORMATION

- i) **Contingency Plan:** In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading

scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

- ii) **Recording of Online Activities:** All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings. Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.
- iii) **Online Etiquette:** Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:
- Use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
 - “Arrive” to class on time
 - Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
 - To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
 - Unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting
 - The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:
 - If you wish to speak, select the blue “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question.
 - Kindly remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking.
 - Self-identify when speaking.
 - Kindly remember to select the “raise hand” function again to lower your hand, mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise).

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of “Zoom-bombing” a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Electronic Devices in Classrooms

The in-class use of electronic devices (other than for instructor-approved in-class uses) is expressly prohibited. Students found guilty of disrupting the class with electronic devices will be asked to leave the class and may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the system requirements for Zoom. Information about the system requirements is available at the following link: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>. Please note that Zoom servers are located outside Canada. If you would prefer to use only your first name or a nickname to login to Zoom, please provide this information to the instructor in advance of the test or examination.